

REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claim 1-9 are pending. Claims 1, 7, 8, and 9 are independent.

Claims 1, and 7-9 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson (US Patent No. 5,553,289) in view of Nielsen (US Patent No. 6,405,243).

Claims 2-6 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Nielsen and Domen (US Patent No. 5,504,676).

Claims 1-9 have been amended, and, thus, claims 1-9 remain pending for reconsideration, which is requested.

No new matter has been added in this Amendment. The foregoing rejections are respectfully traversed.

PRIOR ART

The Examiner seems to assert that Nielsen's e-mail, the recipient of the email, the e-mail address, and the server database including the e-mail address, correspond, respectively, to the present invention's document, the distribution target, the attribute information relating to the distribution target of the document, and the master attribute information. Independent claims 1-9 are amended to clarify the patentably distinguishing features of the present invention that the attribute information of the invention is not only an email address but "a plurality types of attribute information ... relating to distribution targets of each electronic multimedia object for the job," by reciting:

determining, for each electronic multimedia object ...
whether the plurality types of attribute information included in the electronic multimedia object conflicts with the master attribute information to manage the distribution targets of the electronic multimedia objects; and

rewriting any of the plurality types of attribute information included in the electronic multimedia object when said determination section determines that the plurality types of attribute information conflicts with the master attribute information (see, emphasis added, e.g., claim 1 and page 3 of the Office Action).

JOHNSON

Johnson discloses an email classification system. In Johnson, a "distribution" means an

email document to be distributed, which contains media, such as an image, audio, etc. (see, Johnson, column 1, lines 39-52 and claim 1). Further, in Johnson, the attribute information relate to media types of an email. More particularly, Johnson's attribute information is an email classification, such as PRIVATE, URGENT, etc., based upon media type of the email, such as whether audio, text, etc. (see, Johnson, Abstract).

However, in Johnson the email classification by the attribute information is merely information alert to the user or to the system to take specific action when disseminating the document to the destination email addresses. Therefore, Johnson does not relate to the claimed recitation:

determining, for each electronic multimedia object ...
whether the plurality types of attribute information included in the electronic multimedia object conflicts with the master attribute information to manage the distribution targets of the electronic multimedia objects" (claim 1).

Further, the Examiner admits that Johnson does not disclose the claimed recitation:

rewriting any of the plurality types of attribute information included in the electronic multimedia object when said determination section determines that the plurality types of attribute information conflicts with the master attribute information (see, e.g., claim 1 and page 3 of the Office Action).

Therefore, there is no suggestion or motivation to combine Johnson with Nielsen, because Johnson does not suggest any attribute information conflict checking, but Johnson relates to email classification.

Nielsen

The Examiner appears to rely on Nielsen for the claimed recitation:

rewriting any of the plurality types of attribute information included in the electronic multimedia object when said determination section determines that the plurality types of attribute information conflicts with the master attribute information (e.g., claim 1).

However, Nielsen discloses a method of updating email addresses by using an address-change server (see, Abstract). The Examiner appears to be asserting that Nielsen's automated email forwarding is similar to the claimed invention (see, Nielsen, column 5, line 60 to column 6, line 10). In Nielsen, whenever the sender's email program receives a message from the network, it checks whether it is an error message of the type "userid unknown" or "host-name unknown." If such an error message is received, the email program uses the address-change server to attempt updating the email address and forward the email to the updated email

address by using services of the address-change server.

More particularly, the Examiner seems to assert that Nielsen's e-mail, the recipient of the email, the e-mail address, and the server database including the e-mail address, correspond, respectively, to the present invention's document, the distribution target, the attribute information relating to the distribution target of the document, and the master attribute information. See, page 4 of the Office Action and Response to the Argument on page 10 of the Office Action. However, the claimed invention differs from Nielsen as follows:

(1) First, the present invention's master attribute information, which corresponds to a plurality of types of attribute information, differs from Nielsen's database, which is directed to the management of only one type of attribute information, namely the mere e-mail address. Therefore, Nielsen does not disclose or suggest the claim 1 recitation, "master attribute information for a plurality of attribute information included in said electronic multimedia objects." The present invention's plurality types of attribute information relate to the distribution targets of the electronic multimedia objects, such as information about people, organizations, departments, issuers, etc. for the electronic multimedia objects.

(2) Second, the present invention's determination section determines whether the attribute information of the electronic multimedia object conflicts with the master attribute information. In contrast, Nielson merely teaches sending an error message to the sender of the e-mail when it is determined that the e-mail address specified as the destination of the e-mail address that has been sent by the sender does not exist in the network database server. When the sender receives the error message, the program on the sender's computer accesses the address-change server and rewrites the destination input in the e-mail to a new e-mail address, such that the e-mail can then be re-sent to the correct destination.

(3) Third, regarding updating the sender's address book on the sender's computer, it is also carried out based on the determination of whether the old e-mail address exists in the address book. That is, when it is determined that the old e-mail address does not exist in the address book, the new e-mail address is added to the address back, and when it is determined that the old e-mail address exists in the address book, the old e-mail address is replaced with the new e-mail address. See, Nielsen, column 7, lines 15-25. In such an adding and replacing update process based on the mere existence of the e-mail address, if, for example the recipient obtains a second address in addition to a previously registered first address that is still valid, the first address will be deleted from the address book through the update process. In contrast, the updating according to the present invention, which is based on the determination of whether

there is a conflict, such a deletion may not happen, and, thus, the distribution targets of the electronic multimedia object can be managed more flexibly and appropriately.

(4) Fourth, Nielsen does not even perform any conflict checking, because as indicated in column 6, line 1, the network database only determines if an email address is unknown. The Examiner asserts that Nielsen's address-change server 103 inherently performs conflict checking by searching for an old email address in the update email database (Nielsen, Fig 3, operation 305). See, page 4 of the Action. However, Nielsen's address-change server 103 or sender computer 101 does not check whether an input email address is incorrect before sending the email (i.e., "conflict checking") and passively relies on email error messages received from the network to attempt to update the previously sent incorrect email address.

In contrast to Nielsen, the present invention, for example, provides a personnel server 30 and an enterprise-department server 30. The significance of having the personnel server 30 and the enterprise-department server 31 differentiates the present Invention from that of Nielsen. The issuer and the distribution target of the multimedia information are actively determined by the system of the present invention. In contrast, Nielsen relies on the notification of address-change, which is passively received by the system based upon receipt of emails. Therefore, in Nielsen whenever the sender's email program receives a message from the network, it checks whether it is an error message of the type "userid unknown" or "host-name unknown." If such an error message is received, the email program uses the address-change server to attempt updating the email address and forward the email to the updated email address by using services of the address-change server. In contrast to Nielsen, the present invention does not require reception of e-mails, which differs from the disclosure of Nielsen. The issuer and the distribution target both depend on (are based upon) information of the people, the organization, and the money pipeline (departments). Here, departments, such as accounting and engineering departments, are referred to as the money pipeline. According to the present invention, attributes, which correspond to additional information added to the multimedia object, such as a drawing, a specification, an image, or a voice, are obtained to determine the issuer and the distribution target of the object (collectively "attribute information relating to distribution targets of each electronic multimedia object").

Therefore, Nielsen does not disclose or suggest the recitation:

determining, for each electronic multimedia object ...
whether the plurality type of attribute information included in the
electronic multimedia object conflicts with the master attribute
information to manage the distribution targets of the electronic

multimedia objects (e.g., claim 1).

Accordingly, Nielsen cannot disclose or suggest the recitation “rewriting any of the plurality types of attribute information included in the electronic multimedia object when said determination section determines that the plurality type of attribute information conflicts with the master attribute information,” because Nielsen does not rely on any conflict checking of a plurality types of attribute information with master attribute information.

Further, the Examiner asserts that emails of Nielson are same as documents of the present invention (page 4 of the Action). However, the claims are amended to expressly recite “electronic multimedia objects used/produced when performing jobs.” The present Invention is directed to distribution management of all kinds of multimedia information, such as drawings, specifications, project proposals, and catalogs, as well as data, such as programs, and, thus, the claimed invention is not just limited to “documents.” Support for the amendments can be found, for example, in page 9, lines 1-8 of the present Application.

DOMEN

Regarding claims 2-6, Domen relates to processing jobs of an office using forms of a predetermined input format. Domen's example office forms include department code and department name information. In particular, Domen accommodates job processing when a form's format is updated by separating a form's format information from processing of data input in the form (col. 3, line 57 to col. 4, line 17 and col. 15, lines 3-6). Therefore, Domen relates to managing form format changes, and does not relate to changes in attribute information to manage distribution targets of the electronic multimedia objects. See, Domen, FIG. 5C.

Therefore, Domen does not relate to the claimed recitation, “to manage the distribution targets of the electronic multimedia objects.” Reliance on Domen to reject claims 2-6 is misplaced, because the Examiner is only relying on Domen's disclosure regarding business forms that include department codes and names. Domen is silent on managing distribution target information of electronic multimedia objects. Dependent claims 2-6 (depending, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1) recite patentably distinguishing features of their own with respect to corporation organizational information, which is an example of the recitation: “a plurality types of job attribute information to manage the distribution targets of the documents” and, therefore, at least dependent claim 2-6 are allowable.

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks presented above, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-9 and allowance of claims 1-9 is respectfully requested.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,
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